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INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204-2797**

JOSEPH E. KERNAN
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***Kernan names task force to make
recommendations on college affordability***

Gov. Joe Kernan today announced that he has appointed a 13-member task force to make policy recommendations aimed at ensuring college remains affordable for Hoosiers.

"A college education should be and can be a realistic option for all Hoosiers," Kernan said. "Families, in particular, often face tough decisions when it comes to affording their kids' college education. We must make sure we are doing all we can to make those decisions easier, not only for them but for anyone who wants to earn a college degree."

The governor added that access to a college education for all Hoosiers is important to the state's continued economic growth.

"Indiana's world-class colleges and universities are key to our ability to attract business investment and growth," Kernan said. "We have to make sure our workforce has the skills needed to compete for good, high wage jobs in this global economy. That's why access and affordability to college can't an issue."

The new Task Force on College Affordability includes representation from both public and private higher education institutions, as well as legislators and the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana. In naming the task force, Kernan emphasized the need for the group to look at all aspects of the affordability issue, including tuition and fees, as well as financial assistance.

"We also have to look at a student's ability to pay for college and consider closely at what financial resources and assistance we have to offer," Kernan said.

The task force is the latest in several steps the governor has taken to help address college affordability. Earlier this year, he suggested a tuition information policy to the state's public colleges and universities. That policy included the recommendation that tuition and fees not be increased by more than 4 percent for the 2004-05 school year, as well as that at least one on-campus public meeting be held prior to the adoption of new rates.

Members of the task force are:

- State Representative Tiny Adams, Muncie;
- Frederick Bauer, member, Indiana Commission for Higher Education;
- State Representative Larry Buell, Indianapolis;
- Steve Campbell, member, the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana;
- Dr. Otto Doering, professor, Purdue University, and member, Indiana Education Roundtable;
- State Senator Luke Kenley, Noblesville;
- Stephen Ferguson, member, Indiana University Board of Trustees, and member, Indiana Education Roundtable;
- Norma Fewell, student, Ivy Tech State College-Kokomo;
- State Senator Tim Lanane, Anderson;
- Timothy McGinley, member, Purdue University Board of Trustees;
- Thomas Reilly, member, Government Efficiency Commission;
- Dennis Rittenmeyer, president, Calumet College of St. Joseph; and,
- Hutch Schumaker, member, Ivy Tech State College Board of Trustees.

Bauer will serve as the chair of the task force. The task force will hold its first meeting in August, with recommendations to be made to the governor by Dec. 15.

Reporters' contacts: Jonathan Swain or Lisa Sirkin, 317-232-4578